WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of generating a payment indicium, comprising:

generating a corroborative digital token from payment information; and

modulating a base image with a graphical encoding of the corroborative digital

token to produce a payment indicium.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the payment information from which

the corroborative digital token is generated includes an indication of payment

amount.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the payment information from which

the corroborative digital token is generated includes postal data.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the postal data includes destination

address information.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the base image includes a user-

selected image.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the corroborative digital token is

generated from a cryptographic transformation of the payment information.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the base image is modulated based

upon a half-tone encoding process.

8. A system for generating a payment indicium, comprising an encoder

configured to:

generate a corroborative digital token from payment information; and

modulate a base image with a graphical encoding of the corroborative digital

token to produce a payment indicium.

9. A method of extracting payment information from a payment indicium,

comprising:

3   extracting a digital token from a payment indicium based upon a comparison

4   of the payment indicium and a base image;

5   decoding the extracted digital token to produce a decoded message; and

6   extracting from the decoded message payment information encoded in the

7   payment indicium.

1   10.   A method of generating a payment indicium, comprising:

2   rendering a payment indicium containing embedded payment information on

3   a printing surface with a printing characteristic that degrades with photographic

4   reproductions such that the embedded payment information is extractable from an

5   original rendering of the payment indicium but is un-extractable from a photographic

6   reproduction of an original rendering of the payment indicium.

1   11.   The method of claim 10, wherein the payment indicium is rendered as

2   a bit map image with a resolution selected to be irreproducible by photographic

3   reproduction techniques having a maximum resolution of 600x600 dots per inch, or

4   less.

1   12.   The method of claim 10, wherein the payment indicium is rendered as

2   a bit map image with a resolution of 100 dots per inch, or greater.

1   13.   The method of claim 10, wherein the payment indicium is rendered as

2   a bit map image with a resolution of 125 dots per inch, or greater.

1   14.   The method of claim 10, wherein the payment indicium is rendered

2   with a resolution selected based at least in part upon how the payment indicium is

3   rendered on the printing surface.

1   15.   A method of generating a payment indicium, comprising:

2   encoding payment information into a corroborative digital token based at least

3   in part upon one or more variable encoding parameters; and

4   rendering a payment indicium containing the encoded payment information.

1   16.   The method of claim 15, wherein one or more of the encoding

2   parameters vary with payment value.

     17.   The method of claim 16, wherein an encoding security level parameter

2   varies with payment value.

1   18.   The method of claim 17, wherein an encoding private key bit length

2   parameter varies with payment value.

     19.   The method of claim 16, wherein an encoding robustness parameter

     varies with payment value.

     20.   The method of claim 19, wherein an error correction code redundancy

     parameter varies with payment value.